

This is what the law demands and this is the right thing to do.

I urge my fellow members to support the Simmons-LoBiondo amendment.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the amendment offered by the gentleman from Connecticut.

As my colleague explained, this amendment will restore the Coast Guard's research and development funding to the Service's budget. The removal of this funding from the Coast Guard's direct control will constrict the Service's ability to direct funding to research programs to support both the Coast Guard's traditional and homeland security missions.

Mr. Chairman, this is the second year that the Administration has proposed to transfer this funding to the Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate. The Administration has reasoned that the consolidation of research programs within the Department will reduce redundancies and maximize resources available for the entire Department. However, this reasoning does not take into account the strong focus of the Coast Guard's research program to improve the Service's capabilities to carry out its traditional missions of search and rescue, providing aids to navigation, oil spill response and prevention, and illegal drug and migrant interdiction.

Last year, the Coast Guard identified several key areas of concentration for its research and development programs that focused on enhancement to the Coast Guard's maritime safety, maritime mobility, marine environmental protection, and maritime domain awareness programs. I cannot help but be very skeptical that the Coast Guard's research and development program will continue to support such a broad scope of investigations under a DHS program that is wholly devoted to improving homeland security.

The Coast Guard has always been and has continued to be a unique, multi-mission Service within the Federal government. As such, Congress required the Coast Guard to remain an independent entity within the Department of Homeland Security with complete control over all of the Service's functions, authorities, and assets. Any changes to the Coast Guard's research and development program will restrict the Service's ability to improve methods to protect the safety and security of lives and vessels in U.S. waters and on the high seas.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and to maintain the integrity of the Coast Guard by restoring funding for the Service's research and development program. I thank the gentleman from Connecticut again for bringing forth this amendment.

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I rise to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I applaud the great work the chairman and the ranking member are doing on this bill, but also wish to express my deep concerns and ask for a colloquy with the chairman.

We are not paying enough attention to the northern border of the United States. Unless they represent the border States like Minnesota, some Members may not realize that the U.S.-Canada border is over 4,000 miles long and consists of over 430 official and unofficial ports of entry. However, even with recent staffing moves, moves that I

commend, the Customs and Border Patrol has only 1,000 agents along the northern border. That compares to over 10,000 agents on the border which is half the length of the U.S.-Canada border.

This staffing shortage along the northern border poses a real security threat. In fact, due to the shortage, the Department of Homeland Security has looked for new ways to monitor the Canadian border, such as a new proposed requirement for passports to get back and forth across the border. Unfortunately, anyone who has spent time up north knows this will not accomplish much to deter or prevent illegal activities or to secure the border.

Simply put, the Canadian border is just too vast for such an approach to work with many unmanned check points in remote areas. I know from personal stories that at some of these unmanned crossings, people have to wait an hour or more before a border patrol agent can come to lift up the gate so they can cross.

Mr. Chairman, we do not expect al Qaeda and narcotics traffickers to wait an hour for the border patrol to show up at the check point. We have already recognized in numerous laws that high-tech border surveillance must be integrated into the manpower and resources we have up there to get real control over our borders.

In the prior year's Defense Authorization Act, in the prior year's Homeland Security Appropriations Act, and in this year's Intelligence Reform Act, Congress recognized the need to develop high-tech border surveillance. However, what little progress the Department of Homeland Security has made on this front has been entirely confined to the southern border even with the \$10 million appropriated in this bill last year. Mr. Chairman, this is unacceptable. We simply are not paying enough attention to the northern border.

Some think the southern border is more dangerous, but I remind my colleagues that terrorists will attack us through the path of least resistance. I believe it is critical that the funds allocated to the Customs and Border Patrol accounts used to pay much-needed research and survey technology, including unmanned aerial vehicles, be not solely devoted to the southern border but also to the northern border to stretch the resources our Custom and Border Patrol manpower has.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that the gentleman from Kentucky work with me to ensure that there is sufficient resources in the bill and in the conference report to address these issues and that it be applied not just to the southern border but to the northern border as well.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for bring-

ing up this important subject. The gentleman makes an extremely important point, and that is we have two borders, the southwest and the Canadian border.

Over the years, I have to agree, we have neglected the northern border. So I join the gentleman in his sentiments that we find the monies, or be sure that the monies we have appropriated are spent on both borders. I thank the gentleman for bringing up that very important point.

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for that commitment and look forward to working with him on this through the conference report.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Chairman, in the supplemental bill that we just passed, there was \$36 million that had been appropriated for the northern border which the Department was not spending, and with the cooperation of the chairman, we inserted specific language telling the Department to spend the \$36 million on the northern border.

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member for his commitment on this issue and look forward to working on this supplemental and other issues to ensure that the northern border remains secure.

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise informally.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KING of Iowa) assumed the Chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

The Committee resumed its sitting.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, as authorized by section 103 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 113), \$18,505,000.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Information Officer, as authorized by section 103 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 113), and Department-wide technology investments, \$303,700,000; of which \$75,756,000 shall be available for salaries and expenses; and of which \$227,944,000 shall be available for development and acquisition of information technology equipment, software, services, and related activities for the Department of Homeland Security, and for the costs of conversion to narrowband communications, including the cost for operation of the land mobile radio legacy systems, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That none of the funds appropriated shall be used to support or supplement the appropriations provided for the